Lastly, newspapers occupied an important place in all civilised countries. It was the newspapers that discussed the *pros* and *cons* of every public action and brought to the notice of the Government the real effect of every such action. The Newspapers Regulation which was intended to curb the freedom of the Press should therefore be immediately repealed. The tiffin allowance given to newspaper reporters during the Assembly session should also be continued.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Visvanatha Pillai, your mind has ranged over a spacious field of things that might have been and things that need not have been. And you pointed to heights which make more prudent men giddy with apprehension.

But for all that, we cannot afford to do without the enthusiasm and reformative zeal of youth. I am quite sure that when such zeal and such enthusiasm pervade the country to such an extent as to become a real vital force able to feed upon and assimilate the nutriment which is conducive to political development and when that force thereafter attains maturity of discretion and wisdom and when it is supported by a powerful and strong army of a cultured electorate, I have not the slightest doubt that the necessity will disappear for the members of this Assembly to represent, year in and year out, the need for responsible Government in this country.

Personally, I shall be able to call an hour or so of the day my own if there were others to shoulder the burden of administration with me. But there are burdens which we have to bear alone sometimes for the good of the country; and if the occasion is not yet ripe for the introduction of an Executive Council and Responsible Government as you call them, it is not because there is any unwillingness on the part of the authorities to take the people into their confidence, but it is because the time is not opportune. More than that I cannot say.

191. Need for responsible Government for Travancore.

MR. KANAKKU PADMANABHA PILLAI SANKARA PILLAI (*Member, Karunagapalli taluk, Group II*) said that the need for responsible Government for Travancore had been urged upon the Government for the past eight years through the Assembly and other agencies. In British India, the beginnings of self-government had been started as a consequence of the Royal Proclamation of 1917 and it was no wonder that Travancore which out-rivalled British India in education was pressing for responsible Government. In the report submitted before the introduction of the Montford Reforms, it had been stated that responsible government should be introduced in Indian States as well. Statesmen had also expressed the view that, for the sake of uniformity, such government was necessary in Indian States, especially when India obtained *swaraj*. Among Indian States, Travancore stood in the forefront in modern administration and the time was opportune for establishing responsible government there. His Highness the late Maha Raja had, out of his magnanimity, initiated a liberal educational policy and also established popular institutions such as the Assembly and the Legislative Council with a view to train people in local self-government. But the general administrative policy was not in accordance with the aspirations of the subjects and hence not satisfactory.

Referring to the Assembly, the member said that it was still continued as a body of petitioners or complainants. Dewan Bahadur Mr. Raghaviah appointed a committee to suggest proposals for reforming the Assembly, but, nothing practical came out of it. The Assembly was not a statutory body but was only an assemblage of persons called together by the Government. Neither the voters nor the members had any statutory rights. It was deplorable that, in a period of civilisation and progress, the representatives of the people should be left in such a precarious stage. The member said that none of the prayers made by him and the other members of his taluk during the past six years had been granted by the Government. As a preliminary step towards responsible government, the Assembly, the first popular institution introduced with a view to train people in self-government, should be reformed. The Assembly should have power to discuss all questions of administrative policy.

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The franchise for the Assembly had been conferred on persons paying a land tax of Rs. 5 or having an annual income of Rs. 2,000. When the Village Panchayat Regulation came into operation, local needs would be relegated to Village Panchayats and Municipalities. The right of voting to those bodies was vested in all persons above the age of 21 ; and if those bodies be allowed to return members to the Assembly, it would truly turn out to be a representative institution.

As in British India, there should be two bodies in Travancore simliar to the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly or, if that could not be done, the Legislative Council and the Assembly should be amalgamated and a new body created.

The Legislative Council Regulation, II of 1097, did not really confer on the people even the vestige of responsible government. The major part of the annual expenditure could be met without the sanction of the Council. The Council had no power to suggest fresh sources of revenue or prescribe how the total expenditure should be distributed. They could not vote an appointment over Rs. 125 per mensem. In all civilised countries, where there was responsible Government, the power of legislation was vested in the representatives of the people. Although that principle had been adopted in Travancore also, the Newspapers Regulation was enacted by the Sovereign direct. That was not a necessary piece of legislation and should be repealed. If it was realised that the Government and the subjects were not two distinct entities, no need for direct legislation by the Sovereign would arise. The Government were also not quite inclined to carry out the resolutions passed by the Council.

As regards the constitution of the Council, there was not enough provision for representing the people in general. Of the 28 elected seats, only 23 had been set apart for being filled by members from the general constituencies, the remaining 5 seats being reserved for special constituencies such as the *jenmies*, Commerce and Industries and Planters. The Dewan should not be the President of the Council. In order that the Council might become truly a popular institution, it should be connected with the Village Panchayats and Municipalities. The administration of the several departments should be entrusted to two or three members elected by the Council and the Assembly after reconstituting the latter in the manner suggested. It would be quite a satisfactory arrangement if the Dewan and the ministers elected as above were to carry on the whole administration of the State. The reserved subjects could then be entrusted to the Dewan and the transferred subjects to the elected ministers. Although such a system of diarchy was stated to be not enough for British India, in Travancore the government should at least progress so far.

The proposed reform was a necessity. Although Travancore was only a small State, its administration was complicated. A single individual, *viz.*, the Dewan, could not control all the departments satisfactorily. The delay in Government decisions was chiefly due to that undivided control. Further, a decision came to on the considered opinion of two or three individuals would be more valuable than the decision of a single individual. Foreign Dewans took some time before they became acquainted with local conditions and consequently there was no continuity of policy in anything. An Executive Council would remove the defect. If local conditions had been fully known to the Dewan, the Brooke Bond Puduval Scheme would not have been even thought of. A council of elected ministers would not advise the adoption of any scheme which was not popular, as they had to be responsible to the people. The Cochin Harbour Scheme, the Kallar Scheme, the Periyar Works, the appropriation of tea duty, the Interportal Trade Convention, the Kannan Devan Hills Concession, etc. were all evils resulting from the decisions of a single individual.

Administration by a single individual had never brought any good to any country. It had brought more evil than good to Travancore. The Government existed for the people. But it was doubtful whether the existing Government had bestowed any real thought on agriculture, trade, industries and other nation-building activities. The people were not deriving any real benefit from the several departments. Such departments would come to fruition only when the people got a share

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in their administration. The vesting of unlimited powers in a single individual was detrimental to the people at large. That was the main reason why the people were clamouring for responsible government. Government should be carried on by the representatives of the people in whom the people would have confidence. It was not possible for the people to have confidence in foreign Dewans. It was only after responsible government was established in Travancore that the people could hope to fill every office in the State by a Travancorean.

192. Responsible Government.

MR. A. PARAMESVARAN NAIR (*Member, Municipal Council, Neyyattinkara*) while expressing his gratitude towards Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao and Dewan Bahadur Mr. T. Raghaviah, former Dewans, for inaugurating the Assembly and the Legislative Council, respectively, and thereby admitting the people to share, at least nominally, the burden of administration, said that, in the Montague-Chelmsford Report, it had been suggested that Indian States also should try to establish responsible governments as in British India. But it was regrettable to note that no reforms in administration had been carried out; nor was the question of responsible government ever discussed in the Legislative Council. The need for responsible government had, however, been pressed upon the Government by other members of the Assembly already.

The evils in the existing system of administration would vanish with the advent of responsible government which should not be delayed further. A council of ministers would go a long way to help the Dewan in administrative matters. If there had been such a council, the Newspapers Regulation, which was causing untold hardship to the people, would not have been passed. There would also have been no cause for the growth of any suspicion towards the Government, if the Dewan, a native of Travancore, had presided over such a council.

The Indian States would get representation in the Imperial Legislative Council only after responsible governments were established. Many national leaders and statesmen had advocated the establishment of such government. It was only then that the Travancore Government would have any chance of discussing international questions relating to ports, railways, customs, posts and telegraphs, which might crop up for the consideration of the Royal Commission that might be appointed in British India in 1929 in pursuance of the Reform Scheme. The establishment of responsible government in Travancore should therefore engage the earliest attention of the Government.

The free and unrestricted administration by a single individual had never done any good to any country. In Travancore, the transportation of a journalist and the students' strike were instances of the evil aspects of such administration. The changes of policy adopted by successive Dewans and the abortive reforms introduced by them had affected the people not a little. The Dewans being in the majority of cases foreigners, the reforms introduced by them in ignorance of local conditions were sure to cause real hardship to the people. Not only that, such measures would have to be given up after some time. The Land Records Scheme introduced in the previous administration was an instance in point. Some of the officers were becoming irresponsible instead of being really of service to the people and doing public good. That was a result of the existing system of administration.

The Government were not bestowing adequate consideration on prohibition, untouchability, technical education, cottage industries, public health and other subjects vitally affecting the people. Making appointments seemed to be the only national question in Travancore. The main cause for unrest was the unequal and inadequate distribution of salaries among the several officers and the unlimited powers exercised by those in the higher ranks. Appointments should be a means of serving the State and not of earning money. The principle could be brought into practical effect only when responsible government was established in Travancore. Responsible government was also the remedy for doing away with communal

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